

1. The longer you nurse your baby, the healthier your baby will be. But any amount of breastmilk is better than none at all. Even if you do not plan to nurse your baby or if you are not sure if you want to breastfeed, you will give your baby the very best start in life by breastfeeding the first few days. Your first milk, called colostrum, is rich in antibodies and will protect your baby against infection and disease the first few days of life. You may find the breastfeeding experience so wonderful, you will want to continue nursing past the first few days. Most women who begin nursing, are not sure how long they will nurse. Play it by ear, give it a try and just relax and enjoy it for as long as you can. Your baby will be glad you did.

3. You know your aunt means well. She was probably told this all her life. You must respect her, but you know that colostrum is one of the healthiest foods you will ever have the opportunity to give your baby. You might say, "I know people used to think that, Auntie, but doctors found out that the early milk is really very healthy for babies and protects them against disease. I want to give this to my baby to make sure she has this protection." You might even ask your pediatrician or the nurse to talk to her or give her written information about colostrum. If you know there is no reasoning with your aunt, you may just have to stand firm and tell her that you respect her wanting to help, but you know what is best for your baby.

2. Your baby is hungry! You have to feed him! Once your baby arrives, he will be the primary focus in your life and you must always weigh how your decisions will affect your child. Visitors will have to understand that you deserve time alone with your baby now. You might say, "Thank you for coming. My baby is trying to tell me he is hungry and ready to be fed. You are welcome to wait outside in the waiting room. After I've fed her I'll let you know and you can come back." or "Thank you for coming by. My baby is ready to eat now, so could I ask you to leave us while I nurse her? We are just learning so I would feel more comfortable if we could be alone." If you have a support person, perhaps they can shoo the visitors away for you, but if not, you can do it politely!

4. Lucky for you and your baby, there are many breastfeeding resources where you can get help. Your WIC breastfeeding counselor can introduce you to other breastfeeding moms. She can also teach you how to correctly position your baby when you breastfeed so that there will be no pain. Sometimes if you hold your baby in a different position, the pain will stop. There are ways to tell if your baby is getting your milk by counting the number of wet (6-8/24 hrs) and soiled diapers (2-3/24 hrs) your baby makes.

When you see how happy and "full" your baby is, you will know you are doing it right! For help day or night with breastfeeding, call the Mom's Place breastfeeding information and help hotline:

1-800-514-6667

5. Breast size has nothing to do with the amount of milk you make. Women with small breasts have nursed twins! Even if you have flat or inverted nipples, with some assistance you can breastfeed your baby. Here is how you can tell if your baby is getting enough milk:

<u>Count Baby's Dirty Diapers</u>		
Day 1	1-2 Wet	1 Soiled
Day 2	2-3 Wet	2 Soiled
Day 3	3-4 Wet	3 or more Soiled
Day 4	4-5 Wet	3 or more Soiled
Day 5	4-5 Wet	3 or more Soiled
Day 6- 4:	At least 6 wet and at least 3 soiled diapers	

The number of dirty diapers may decrease after 6 weeks. Take care of yourself. Drink to thirst and eat a variety of healthy foods. Your newborn may lose weight in the first few days. By day 5, she should begin gaining weight, 4-8 or more ounces per week.

7. Breastfeed your baby frequently. The laxative effect of the colostrum will help the baby stool more frequently and eliminate meconium at a faster rate. Breastfeeding will help her get over the jaundice.

6. Your breast has a marvelous way of filtering out anything that might harm your baby. Most medications are safe to take, but to be sure, you should always check with your doctor or pharmacist before taking any medication or drug.

You should never take street drugs or illegal substances if you are breastfeeding because they will be passed on to your baby.

No amount of alcohol is safe to take while you are breastfeeding.

8. A long and difficult labor, pain medications during labor and delivery, premature delivery, circumcision, food or drink supplements, jaundice, or swaddling may make your baby too sleepy to breastfeed. Try to wake your baby in the following ways without being aggressive or jarring.

?unswaddle your baby's blankets

?change your baby's diaper

?hold your baby in a standing position

?put baby skin to skin on your breast

?gently rub baby's back, hands, arms and feet, but not repetitiously.

?circle baby's lips with your fingertip

?place a little expressed breastmilk on your nipple. The smell will entice your baby to nurse.

?talk to your baby

?tickle your baby's foot

9. Ask your baby's dad to help you change, dress, rock or bathe the baby.

Ask your WIC counselor for a copy of the brochure, "Especially for Dads" and give it to your baby's father. Tell him how important it is for your baby's health that you breastfeed him. Tell him how important to you breastfeeding is. Tell him you need his help and support to continue breastfeeding.

Ask your WIC breastfeeding counselor for names of other dads of breastfed babies and introduce them to your baby's father. The more he knows about breastfeeding the happier he will be to support your decision.

11. It is not too late for you to breastfeed. Tell the nurse you won't be needing the formula because you decided you want to breastfeed. If you need help, ask the nurse or a breastfeeding counselor to show you how to correctly position your baby and get her to latch on comfortably to your breast. Even if you started out formula feeding, you can start breastfeeding. Many women relactate after their milk dried up.

10. Continue to nurse your newborn frequently. Your baby cannot get a cold through your breastmilk. Your breastmilk is full of antibodies and will protect your baby from getting sick. Ask your pediatrician or pharmacist what medications you can take while breastfeeding. Wash your hands frequently and before you hold your baby.

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12. You must be firm and insist that no adults smoke around your baby. Second hand smoke is very unhealthy for infants and children. It can cause and worsen allergies, respiratory problems, and asthma. Insist that adults who smoke, smoke outside and never around the baby.

13. Try expressing a few drops of milk before you nurse. Massage your breast in a circular motion prior to nursing. Ask a breastfeeding counselor to show you how. Make sure your baby's mouth is open very wide and that she is positioned correctly when you nurse. Try to relax and get comfortable before you nurse. Your baby will pick up on your tension.

15. The best thing you can do for your premature baby is to pump your milk and give it to him. Premature babies thrive on breastmilk, especially the hindmilk that comes after the first 5 minutes of nursing or pumping. By the time your baby is strong enough to suckle at your breast, your milk supply should be built up. Ask your WIC breastfeeding counselor for the pamphlet *Mother's Milk for Premature Babies*, stock #13-46.

14. Any amount of breastfeeding you do before returning to school or work will benefit your baby. Many women continue to breastfeed after returning to work/school because they learn to use an electric breastpump. You can breastfeed when you are with your baby and pump your milk at work for your baby's care giver to feed her while you are away. Or you can breastfeed your baby when you are with her and let the care giver feed her formula when you are at work. Ask your WIC breastfeeding counselor about renting a breast pump. Talk to someone you know who is breastfeeding and working. Ask your WIC breastfeeding coordinator for the tipsheet, *Working and Breastfeeding*, stock #13-104 and *Tips for Pregnant Teens*, stock #13-15.

16. Women all over the world breastfeed and their diets vary as much as their looks or their clothing styles. Just make sure you eat a variety of foods and that you drink to thirst. You can eat whatever you want, but if your baby reacts badly and you suspect it is because of a certain food, cut that food out for a few days and see if your baby gets better. Babies love garlic and many foods. Because breastfed babies receive a variety of foods in their mother's diet, and are not given to overfeeding, they are more likely to have healthier eating habits when they are adults, and they are less likely to be obese adults.

17. One of the great things about breastfeeding is that you do spend more time with your baby, especially during the first few weeks after your baby is born. This is a rare time that you will never again have with your child. Holding your child, breastfeeding her and spending time getting to know her will help you bond with her. Later, when you start to get out more and socialize more, you will find it is much easier to travel with a breastfed baby—nothing to heat, prepare, sterilize, refrigerate or carry around. Your baby will be easier to comfort because you can meet her hunger needs so quickly! You will find your real friends will want to spend time with you and your baby and not turn their back on you because you now have a child to think of.

19. Don't be afraid to ask for help. The only job you really need to be doing right now is feeding and caring for your baby. Ask family and friends to help with house work the first week you are home-- laundry, shopping, and even cooking, like a big pot of soup or stew that you can just heat and eat. Ask your support person to change diapers or bathe baby so you can take a shower or a nap. Relax! Don't worry about housework until later. Nurse frequently to build up your milk supply. Get plenty of rest. You'll get stronger faster and you will have less to worry about because your baby is getting the healthiest food there is. Once you have breastfeeding mastered, you will find it makes your life run much more smoothly.

18. Your breastmilk will provide your baby with antibodies to fight infection and disease. He will have fewer earaches. He will have fewer tummy aches, too, because breastmilk is so easy for him to digest. If your family has a history of allergies, your breastmilk will help keep your baby's allergies from being so severe.

20. Many women nurse twins—even triplets—without ever giving their multiples formula. It takes a little more effort, a little more organization, but if you stick with it, you'll be glad you did. Breastfeeding is much more convenient—nothing to mix, heat, refrigerate and tote everywhere you go. You'll find you have more freedom when you breastfeed. It takes much less time to attach your baby on your breast than it does to prepare a bottle. The more your babies nurse, the more milk you will produce. So with two nursing you'll be making twice as much milk! Count their dirty diapers (ask your WIC breastfeeding counselor about the number to look for) and make sure they are gaining weight so you'll know they are getting plenty to eat!

21. Your organization skills will be put to the test, but you can do it! Don't be afraid to ask for help. If your mom is too busy to prepare a soup or stew or couple of casseroles that could be frozen and reheated, do you have an aunt, friend, neighbor or grandparent who would be willing to do this for you? Ask a reliable neighborhood to come in and do your laundry one day. Call **Mothers of Multiples**, an organization that supports mothers with more than one.

22. There are ways to position your baby other than the conventional cradle hold. Try the football hold that many large-breasted or moms of multiples find comfortable. If you need assistance, ask for a breastfeeding counselor or call 1-800-514-6667. Ask to be put in touch with other women who had C-sections and breastfed.